

Woodstock Board of Education  
Community Participation Committee, Special **Meeting Minutes**  
Saturday, Nov. 18, 2017 from 10 – 11:30 a.m.  
Woodstock Middle School cafeteria  
Community Conversation

Committee Members: Mrs. Megan Bard Morse, Mrs. Valerie Law, Mrs. Joan Fortin  
Board Members: Mr. Michael Bernardi, Mrs. Julie Woodland  
School Administration: Mr. Viktor Toth, superintendent; Mrs. Wendy Durand, WMS principal; Mrs. Jenna Demers, WES principal; Mrs. Karen Munroe, business manager  
Community Members: Mr. Mike Dougherty, finance board chairman; Mr. Pat Boyd, state representative; Candice Syriac, Crystal Adams, Michelle Salvas, John Dlugosz, and Jenny Mills.

I. Call meeting to order

*Meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m.*

II. Update by Superintendent Viktor Toth on 2017-18 academic year

*Mrs. Durand gave an overview of the WMS academic goals and programs. (Please see attached presentation.) Mrs. Demers gave an overview of WES academic goals and programs. She emphasized the increased class sizes in fourth grade. (Please see attached presentation.)*

*Mr. Toth gave an overview of the WPS financial and enrollment status. (Please see attached presentation.) WPS enrollment is not decreasing at the same pace as the rest of the state; as of Nov. 18 there were 445 WES, 404 WMS and 475 HS students (429 WA; 25 Ellis Tech; 6 VOAG; 15 other). Because of larger class sizes and new high school-aged students moving to the district, it's anticipated that WA tuition could require a minimum increase of more than \$560,000 in the 18-19 fiscal year. At WPS, anticipated district staff needs include additional 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers; making music full-time at WES and band full-time at WMS; and maintaining current staff.*

III. Update on state budget as it pertains to Woodstock Public Schools

*Mr. Toth discussed the governor's proposed holdback of education funding for the 2017-18 academic/fiscal year. In Woodstock, this amount is roughly \$699,000. Mr. Toth said that Woodstock is fortunate that the Town Treasurer was conservative when budgeting state revenue.*

*Mr. Boyd said that state legislators are working to have the holdback money released, as intended in the budget approved by the General Assembly. He also said legislators are discussing whether a reduction in state funding will mean the alleviation of some state mandates, as long as the intent is maintained.*

*Mr. Dougherty said the finance board is cautious about receiving state revenue as past practice indicates that additional state holdbacks might be instituted. He said that, at this point, he does not think the allocated funding for schools will be reduced in the current fiscal year.*

#### IV. Community feedback regarding future academic, budget priorities for Woodstock Public Schools

*Several community members suggested distributing a 1-page informational sheet to parents/community-at-large regarding the budget and academic program status of WPS with details about WES, WMS, and the high schools. Other suggestions included posting more information on the WPS website, such as budget documents, prior to budget meetings and forums and regularly updating the site.*

*Some commented that Woodstock is penalized for budgeting efficiently and doing well with what federal, state, and local funding is received.*

*Regarding budget priorities for the 2018-19 year, community members said they needed more time to consider, but offered these suggestions: review what services could be shared with the town, such as facilities; maintain band at WMS; reduce class size; maintain/increase current staffing levels; encourage parental/community volunteers in the classroom; provide greater access to mentoring opportunities/professional development for teachers; solicit community expertise for ways to support the district in areas of need; restore funding for WMS athletics; and eliminate pay-to-play.*

#### V. Adjourn

*Motion to adjourn at 11:40 a.m. by Mrs. Law, second by Mrs. Fortin. Unanimous*

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Bard Morse  
Community Participation Committee, chair